

Message Text

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ORIGIN MBFR-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 ACDA-19 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSO-00

INRE-00 USIE-00 SS-15 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 H-03

OMB-01 EB-11 DODE-00 /124 R

DRAFTED BY D/MBFR:JDEAN - PM/DCA:TSIMONS

8/13/73 EXT. 27772

APPROVED BY P:AMBASSADOR PORTER

EUR:WJSTOESSEL (IN DRAFT)

PM:SWEISS

ACDA:FIKLE

OASD:RBARTHOLOMEW

JCS:WGEORGI

NSC:WHYLAND

S/S:HGBARNES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

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E.O.11652:GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: SOVIET COMMITMENT TO THE SECOND PHASE AND
THE COMMON CEILING

1. AS USNATO HAS REPORTED, AN IMPORTANT ISSUE HAS ARISEN
IN THE COURSE OF NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF THE
US RECOMMENDATION OF A NEGOTIATING APPROACH PRESENTED
TO NATO ON JULY 27. THE RECOMMENDED US APPROACH SUGGESTED
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THAT THE ALLIANCE AS ITS OVERALL OBJECTIVE IN MBFR SEEK
A COMMON CEILING IN NATO AND WARSAW PACT GROUND FORCES
IN THE NATO GUIDELINES AREA AT ABOUT 700,000 MEN ON EACH
SIDE, TO BE NEGOTIATED IN TWO PHASES, WITH THE FIRST PHASE

TO CONSIST OF A REDUCTION OF 29,000 US SOLDIERS IN RETURN FOR A SOVIET TANK ARMY NUMBERING ABOUT 68,000 MEN AND THE SECOND TO COVER A REDUCTION OF ABOUT 50,000 NATO GROUND FORCES IN RETURN FOR ABOUT 120,000 WARSAW PACT FORCES. AS YOU KNOW, THE US PROPOSAL DID NOT SPECIFY THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE WOULD RECOMMEND SEEKING EXPLICIT SOVIET AND EASTERN COMMITMENT IN THE FIRST PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS TO OUR OVERALL REDUCTION PROPOSAL OF A COMMON CEILING, INCLUDING THE CONCEPT OF A COMMON CEILING, THE ACTUAL REDUCTIONS FORESEEN IN THE OVERALL REDUCTION PROGRAM, AND SECOND PHASE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. USNATO REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE ALLIES QUICKLY BEGAN QUESTIONING US AS TO OUR VIEWS ON THIS MATTER. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THE UK WANTS A MINIMUM OF COMMITMENT TO ANY SECOND PHASE BOTH INSIDE THE ALLIANCE AND VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS AND ALSO OPPOSES A COMMON CEILING BASED ON MANPOWER. THE GERMANS ON THE OTHER HAND WANT A COMMON CEILING AGREED DURING FIRST PHASE AND CLOSE LINK BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND PHASES MADE CLEAR.

3. IN OUR VIEW, THE ALLIANCE MUST MAKE SOME PROGRESS SOON TOWARD AN AGREED POSITION ON THIS ISSUE IF IT IS NOT TO BECOME THE MAIN FOCUS OF NATO DISCUSSION ON MBFR AND THEREBY DIVERT ATTENTION AND ENERGY FROM NATO DEVELOPMENT OF THE OVERALL ALLIED NEGOTIATING APPROACH WHICH IS NEEDED WELL BEFORE THE TIME NEGOTIATIONS OPEN OCTOBER 30. FOLLOWING IS FOR YOUR GUIDANCE AS TO BACKGROUND OF WASHINGTON THINKING.

4. BEGIN FYI. THE COMMON CEILING APPROACH THE US IS RECOMMENDING PROVIDES THE MOST EFFECTIVE RATIONALE FOR OUR OVERALL NEGOTIATING EFFORT. IT IS MOTIVATED BY VALID SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS. IT ESTABLISHES A CLEAR GOAL AND FRAMEWORK FOR NEGOTIATIONS AND CAN BE DEFENDED RATIONALLY
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BEFORE BOTH THE EAST AND PUBLIC OPINION.

5. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO OBTAIN SOVIET AGREEMENT TO THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT IN ORDER TO GAIN SOVIET AGREEMENT TO A SECOND STAGE OF NEGOTIATION. THE IDEA OF A SECOND STAGE IS LESS SPECIFIC THAN THAT OF A COMMON CEILING. THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT ON THE OTHER HAND DEFINES THE GOAL OF A SECOND PHASE.

6. EAST-WEST AGREEMENT TO MOVE INTO A SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTIATION WOULD BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A COMMON CEILING. IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL BOTH FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS IN MANY COUNTRIES AND FOR NEGOTIATING REASONS. THE FRG, IN PARTICULAR, AS WELL AS BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS MAY NEED THE ASSURANCE OF FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS TO

DEAL WITH THOSE ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL OPINION DISSATIS-
FIED WITH FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENTS. DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS,
THE WEST WILL NEED A MEANS OF COPING WITH SOVIET PROPO-
SALS TO REDUCE WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES IN A FIRST STAGE;
NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT COULD UNDERMINE CONGRESSIONAL
SUPPORT FOR THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS.

7. NO ONE CAN BE SURE IN ADVANCE OF THE PACT'S REACTION
TO OUR OVERALL REDUCTION PROGRAM AND THE PARTS THEREOF.
BUT THE CONCLUSION SEEMS JUSTIFIED THAT WE WILL HAVE A
DIFFICULT TIME ACHIEVING EASTERN AGREEMENT TO OUR OVERALL
REDUCTION PROGRAM AND THAT INSISTENCE ON EASTERN ACCEPTANCE
OF THE ENTIRE REDUCTION PACKAGE COULD STRETCH OUT THE NE-
GOTIATIONS, WITH ADVERSE EFFECT ON CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT
FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF CONGRESSIONAL
AND ALLIED RECRIMINATIONS IF WE DO NOT ACHIEVE THE WHOLE
OF A NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVE ON WHICH WE HAVE PLACED SUCH
EMPHASIS.

8. CONSEQUENTLY, WE RECOGNIZE THAT AT SOME FUTURE POINT
IN THE ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS, WE MAY BE OBLIGED TO ASSIGN
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PRIORITIES AMONG THE FOUR US NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVES MEN-
TIONED HERE: SOVIET AGREEMENT TO WITHDRAWAL OF A SOVIET
TANK ARMY; SOVIET AGREEMENT TO A SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTI-
ATION; SOVIET AGREEMENT TO THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT;
AND SOVIET AGREEMENT TO OUR SPECIFIC COMMON CEILING PRO-
POSAL TO REDUCE GROUND FORCES ON BOTH SIDES TO ABOUT
700,000 MEN. A FURTHER PRIORITY NEGOTIATING REQUIREMENT
ON WHICH THE US HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO ITS ALLIES --
SOVIET AGREEMENT TO SOME FORM OF CONSTRAINTS ON THE FREE-
DOM TO INTRODUCE AND MOVE THEIR FORCES AFTER REDUCTIONS
HAVE TAKEN PLACE -- IS NOT AT ISSUE IN THE CURRENT NATO
DISCUSSION.

9. HOWEVER, SINCE OUR PRESENT ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET ATTITUDES MUST BE CONDITIONAL, A FINAL US DECISION AS TO THESE PRIORITIES WILL DEPEND PRIMARILY ON THE ACTUAL SOVIET REACTION TO OUR PROPOSALS AND OUR SUBSEQUENT ASSESSMENT OF THEIR CHANCES OF ACCEPTANCE AND CANNOT BE TAKEN NOW. THIS IN TURN MEANS THAT WE SHOULD NOT RECOMMEND TO NATO A POSITION WHICH FORECLOSES A JOINT ALLIED EFFORT TO OBTAIN ALL OUR OBJECTIVES OR WHICH ESTABLISHES PRIORITIES AMONG THEM IN ADVANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS.

10. THERE IS ONE EXCEPTION TO THIS -- THE SPECIFIC FIGURES OF OVERALL REDUCTIONS WE CONTEMPLATE FOR THE ENTIRE NEGOTIATION. WE SHOULD REACH FIRM AGREEMENT WITHIN THE ALLIANCE THAT REDUCTIONS BASED ON A TEN PERCENT DECREASE IN OVERALL NATO GROUND FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA IN RETURN FOR REDUCTION OF TOTAL WARSAW PACT GROUND

FORCES TO THE NEW NATO LEVEL CONSTITUTE OUR FIRM OVERALL NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVE FOR MBFR. ALLIED GOVERNMENTS SHOULD ALSO TELL WESTERN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC OPINION THAT IT IS THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS TO REACH THIS LEVEL. THE ALLIES SHOULD IN OUR VIEW ALSO USE THESE

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GURES IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS TO

ILLUSTRATE

ALLIED OBJECTIVES FOR THEIR OVERALL REDUCTION PROGRAM.

11. IT APPEARS QUESTIONABLE, HOWEVER, WHETHER THE ALLIES SHOULD INSIST FROM THE OUTSET OF NEGOTIATIONS OR AS PART
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OF A FIRST-STAGE AGREEMENT ON A SOVIET COMMITMENT TO THE SPECIFIC FIGURES WE HAVE IN MIND FOR THE OVERALL COMMON CEILING. TO DO SO WOULD RUN THE RISK THAT THE ALLIES WOULD FEEL IMPELLED TO INSIST ON ESTABLISHING NOW THE COMPOSITION OF THE SECOND PHASE OF REDUCTIONS, OR THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD RESPOND BY INSISTING ON NEGOTIATION ON REDUCTION OF EUROPEAN NATO FORCES IN THE FIRST PHASE. MOREOVER, OUR INFORMATION ON SOVIET MANPOWER LEVELS IS NOT, AND IN LIGHT OF THE DIFFICULTY OF OBTAINING RELIABLE INFORMATION, CANNOT AT THIS TIME BE FIRM. WE HAVE INDICATED THAT WE WILL BE PREPARED TO ENTERTAIN ANY EASTERN PRESENTATION OF CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT OUR DATA IS INACCURATE. END FYI.

12. IN THE LIGHT OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, YOU ARE REQUESTED TO REPLY TO QUESTIONS ALREADY ASKED ON THIS SUBJECT AS FOLLOWS:

13. IN THE US VIEW THE ALLIES SHOULD IN THE FIRST PHASE OF MBFR NEGOTIATIONS SEEK SOVIET COMMITMENT TO THE REDUCTION OF A SOVIET TANK ARMY, A SECOND PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS, AND THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT. THE FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT INVOLVING ONLY US/SOVIET REDUCTION SHOULD PROVIDE FOR A SECOND PHASE. THE ALLIES SHOULD ILLUSTRATE TO THE SOVIETS OUR GOAL OF A COMMON CEILING AT ABOUT 700,000 MEN, AND TEST SOVIET REACTION TO THIS OVERALL NEGOTIATING AIM BUT NOT INSIST ON SOVIET AGREEMENT TO THIS GOAL AS A PREREQUISITE TO NEGOTIATING THE FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT.

14. OUR WHOLE APPROACH IS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF PARITY IN THE OBJECTIVES WE SEEK AND BALANCE IN OUR PROPOSED METHODS FOR OBTAINING THEM, THUS PROVIDING A THEME THAT CAN EFFECTIVELY BE DEFENDED IN NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT SHOULD GAIN SUPPORT AMONG NATO PARLIAMENTS, THE US CONGRESS AND THE WESTERN PUBLIC.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 10 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE161267
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: D/MBFR:JDEAN - PM/DCA:TSIMONS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730869/abqcencu.tel
Line Count: 218
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN MBFR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <21-Sep-2001 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: SOVIET COMMITMENT TO THE SECOND PHASE AND THE COMMON CEILING
TAGS: PARM, NATO
To: NATO INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005